MR. A. KUMARA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government*): The whole region is generally under water, during high floods.

MR. K. P. ABRAHAM (*Muvattupuzha* cum *Todupuzha*): Will not the opening of the sluice increase the floods and the damage due to floods, in the region lower down the river?

MR. A. KUMARA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government*): I do not think there would be substantial increase of the flood-level on account of the opening of the sluice.

MR. K. P. ABRAHAM (*Muvattupuzha* cum *Todupuzha*): Am I to understand that the level is the same throughout the region lower down the river?

MR. A. KUMARA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government*): I did not say so. What I say is that whatever be the damage caused, it is the inevitable result of floods and that the opening of the sluice does not substantially aggravate the situation.

MR. K. P. ABRAHAM (*Muvattupuzha* cum *Todupuzha*): But the opening of the sluice is done by human agency, and so can be avoided.

MR. A. KUMARA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government*): I say there is no harm in opening the sluice, because it is opened slowly and gradually, and that only during high floods when damage is inevitable, whether the sluice, is opened or not.

MR. K. P. ABRAHAM (*Muvattupuzha* cum *Todupuzha*): Who is to be held responsible for the damage caused by the opening of the sluice, however little such damage may be?

MR. A. KUMARA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government*): I have already stated that no appreciable damage would be caused by the opening of the sluice. And, the people are given previous notice.

Taking over for departmental maintenance the ryots' road connecting the Vazhakulam-Vazhittala road with the Todupuzha-Pala road.

328. **MR. K. P. ABRAHAM** (*Muvattupuzha* cum *Todupuzha*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) whether they received any petition in Makaram 1107 from the Road Board Committee in Arikuzha, Manakad pakuthi, Todupuzha taluk, for recognition and maintenance by Government of a six mile ryots' road constructed by the petitioners and others and connecting the Vazhakulam-Vazhittala road with the Todupuzha—Pala road near the Todupuzha bridge; and

(*b*) if the answer to part (*a*) is in the affirmative, the action taken on that petition and the decision made on it?

MR. A. KUMARA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government*): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) It has been forwarded to the Chief Engineer for disposal.

V. H. schools in the State.

329. **MR. A. NARAYANA PILLAI** (*Vaikam*): Will the Government be pleased to state the number of V. H. schools in the State at present (16-11-1107)?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Six.

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